

REMARKS

Prior to this Reply, Claims 1-25 were pending. Applicants note that Claims 26-46 were previously cancelled.

Through this reply, new Claims 47-52 have been added. Claims 2, 11 and 20 have been cancelled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter contained therein. Furthermore, the limitations of Claims 2, 11 and 20 have been added to Claims 1, 9 and 18, respectively. In addition, Claims 1, 3-6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 19, 21 and 23 have been amended. Accordingly, Claims 1, 3-10, 12-19, 21-25 and 47-52 are now at issue in the present case.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to Claims 4-6, 14, 15, 22 and 23 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, the Examiner indicated that such claims would be allowable if they were rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims.

Instead of rewriting such claims in independent form, Applicants offer the arguments presented below.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,895,270 to Maddox (hereinafter “Maddox”). In response, Applicants have amended such claims.

Applicants believe that Maddox does not include all of the limitations of the claims as amended. For example, Maddox does not teach the step of: “gradually reducing the magnetic

field to a second strength level by multiple stepwise decrements in the magnetic field, to essentially eliminate net magnetization in the magnetic media,” as required by Claims 1 and 9.

In contrast to the Examiner’s assertion on page 4 of the Office Action (in connection with original Claims 2 and 11), Applicants submit that U.S. Patent No. 6,747,823 to Saito et al. (hereinafter “Saito”) does not disclose or suggest such limitation. More specifically, Saito does not disclose reduction of a magnetic field in multiple stepwise decrements. Indeed, in Col. 8, lines 55-65, in referring to the curve in Fig. 2, Saito mentions gradual change of a magnetic field without any mention of stepwise decrements in the magnetic field. If the Examiner believes otherwise, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner specifically point to the description in Saito that discloses stepwise decrements in the magnetic field from a first level to a second level. Furthermore, Applicants submit that U.S. Patent No. 6,570,727 to Tamura (hereinafter “Tamura”) fails to provide the missing limitation.

For at least the above reasons, Applicants believe that Claims 1 and 9 are patentably distinguishable from Maddox, Saito and Tamura. For at least the same reasons, Applicants submit that all claims that depend from Claims 1 and 9 are likewise patentably distinguishable from Maddox, Saito and Tamura.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claims 7, 8, 10, 16, 18, 19 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maddox in view of Tamura.

With respect to Claim 18 (as amended), Applicants submit that such claim is patentably distinguishable from Maddox and Tamura for reasons similar to those provided above in connection with Claims 1 and 9. Furthermore, for at least the reasons provided in relation to

Claims 1, 9 and 18, Applicants submit that Claims 7, 8, 10, 16, 19 and 24 are patentably distinguishable from Maddox and Tamura.

The Examiner rejected Claims 2, 3 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maddox in view of Saito.

As described above, the limitations of original Claims 2 and 11 have been incorporated into independent Claims 1 and 9, respectively. As discussed in relation to Claims 1 and 9, Maddox and Saito, alone or in combination, do not disclose all of the limitations of Claims 1 and 9 (as amended).

With respect to Claims 3 and 12, Applicants submit that Saito does not disclose that “stepwise decrements are separated by predetermined time periods,” as required by Claims 3 and 12. In Col. 7, Col. 8 and Col. 9, lines 5-9 (relied on by the Examiner), Saito simply discusses gradual change of the magnetic field over time, without any discussion of stepwise decrements separated by time periods. For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 3 and 12 are patentably distinguishable from Saito and Maddox.

With respect to Claim 13, in Col. 10, lines 47-50 (relied on by the Examiner), Applicants submit that Saito does not disclose that: “the duration of each time period is based on the speed of rotation of the data disk,” as required by Claim 13. In Col. 10, lines 47-50, Saito simply mentions an example disk revolution of 3000 rpm, and that to *gradually* decrease the magnetic field, the distance between the head and the recording medium is gradually increased. There is no stepwise reduction of magnetic field in Saito. Saito does not mention stepwise decrements separated by time periods. Furthermore, Saito does not disclose stepwise decrements separated by time periods that are based on the speed of rotation of the data disk. If the Examiner believes otherwise, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner specifically point to the description

of such limitation in Saito. For at least the above reasons, Applicants submit that Claim 13 is patentably distinguishable from Maddox and Saito.

The Examiner rejected Claims 17, 20, 21 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maddox and Tamura and further in view of Saito.

With respect to Claim 17, Applicants submit that such claim is patentably distinguishable from Maddox, Tamura and Saito for at least the reasons presented with respect to Claim 9 (as amended), since Claim 17 depends from Claim 9. Furthermore, as admitted by the Examiner, Maddox and Tamura do not disclose the steps of: “moving the electromagnets essentially radially in relation to the rotating data disk to expose recording area on the disk surfaces to said magnetic field,” as required by Claim 17. Applicants submit that Saito makes no mention (in Col. 10, lines 18-30 (relied on by the Examiner) or elsewhere) of radial movement of electromagnets in relation to a rotating disk drive for demagnetization. Indeed, Saito is based on moving heads (electromagnets) up and away, in a perpendicular direction, from the recording medium (Col. 10, lines 51-55), rather than parallel to the recording medium in a radial direction as claimed. For at least the above reasons, Applicants submit that Claim 17 is patentably distinguishable from Maddox, Tamura and Saito.

Claim 25 was rejected for reasons similar to those set forth with respect to Claim 17. Applicants submit that Claim 25 is patentably distinguishable from Maddox, Tamura and Saito for reasons similar to those presented above with respect to Claim 17.

With respect to Claim 20, as mentioned above, the limitations of Claim 20 have been incorporated into independent Claim 18. Accordingly, the rejection of Claim 20 is now moot.

With respect to Claim 21, such claim was rejected for reasons similar to those set forth with respect to Claim 12. Accordingly, for reasons similar to those presented with respect to

Claim 12 above, Applicants submit that Claim 21 is patentably distinguishable from Maddox, Tamura and Saito.

IV. New Claims

New independent Claims 47, 49 and 51 include the limitations of Claims 1, 9 and 18 as originally filed, in addition to the limitation that “at least one of the first and second strength levels is based on the magnetic coercivity of the magnetic media.” Applicants submit that the above-quoted limitation is not disclosed by the cited references.

New dependent Claims 48, 50 and 52 add the limitation that the magnetic field is reduced “from the first strength level to the second strength level based on the magnetic coercivity of the magnetic media.” Applicants believe that such limitation is not disclosed by the cited references.

V. Additional Claim Fees

In determining whether additional claim fees are due, reference is made to the Fee Calculation Table (below).

Fee Calculation Table

	Claims Remaining After Amendment		Highest Number Previously Paid For	Present Extra	Rate	Additional Fee
Total (37 CFR 1.16(c))	28	Minus	46	= 0	x \$50 =	\$ 0.00
Independent (37 CFR 1.16(b))	6	Minus	7	= 0	x \$200 =	\$ 0.00

As set forth in the Fee Calculation Table (above), Applicants previously paid claim fees for forty-six (46) total claims and for seven (7) independent claims. Accordingly, Applicants believe no further fees are due. Nevertheless, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2198 for any fee deficiencies associated with filing this paper.

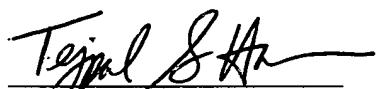
VI. Conclusion

It is believed the above comments establish patentability. Applicants do not necessarily accede to the assertions and statements in the Office Action, whether or not expressly addressed.

Applicants believe that the application appears to be in form for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number regarding any matters relating to the present application.

Respectfully submitted,



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